NEIGHBOURHOOD CO-OPERATION PRIORITIES FOR MOROCCO 2012-2014

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Introduction

Council of Europe policy towards its immediate neighbourhood

At its 121st session on 11 May 2011 in Istanbul, the Committee of Ministers took note of the Secretary General's proposals concerning Council of Europe (CoE) policy with regard to its immediate neighbours, and invited him to draw up action plans for the implementation of this policy, for approval by the Committee of Ministers.

The CoE policy with regard to its immediate neighbours is organised around the following three objectives:

- to facilitate the political transition to democracy;
- to help promote good governance on the basis of the relevant CoE standards and mechanisms;
- to reinforce and broaden the regional work of the CoE in combating transfrontier and global threats.

To that end, a general framework for co-operation with countries which are its immediate neighbours has been put in place, providing in particular for:

- dialogues for co-operation with neighbouring countries;
- priorities for co-operation with neighbouring countries.

The document "Neighbourhood Co-operation Priorities for Morocco 2012-2014" was endorsed by the Committee of Ministers of the CoE on 2 April 2012 and formally approved by the Secretary General of the CoE and the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Morocco during the visit of the Moroccan Minister of Foreign Affairs in Strasbourg on 24 April 2012.

Main Objectives

The document "Neighbourhood Co-operation Priorities for Morocco 2012-2014" is a flexible, dynamic strategic tool setting out a detailed framework for co-operation between Morocco and the CoE for the period 2012-2014.

It is intended to assist the process of democratic transition in Morocco and help the country tackle challenges relating to human rights, the rule of law and democracy.

The main objectives assigned to this co-operation may be summarised as follows:

- for Morocco to benefit from the CoE's experience in establishing democracy, notably by providing expertise, good practice, training, advice, elections observation, sponsorship, internships etc.;
- to consolidate Morocco's presence in the CoE structures with which it has already established co-operation (Venice Commission, European Pharmacopoeia, Pompidou Group MedNet network) and to encourage its participation in other partial agreements and mechanisms;
- to bring Moroccan legislation into line with CoE standards, with a view to the possible ratification of a certain number of the Organisation's conventions open to non-member States, in conformity with the procedures described in the relevant conventions.

The main spheres of action presented in this paper have been identified on the basis of the country's priorities established by the Moroccan authorities, within the CoE's areas of expertise. The co-operation framework also takes into account the activities of other organisations and certain partner States. The work of the CoE in the region will be designed above all to foster synergies among all those involved in order to avoid duplication.

The implementation of several activities in the scope of this document has already started, particularly in the framework of the Programme of the EU and the CoE «Strengthening democratic reform in the Southern Neighbourhood.»

The Council of Europe and Morocco

For many years, the CoE has been co-operating with Morocco in a wide range of areas. Morocco is a full member of several CoE Partial Agreements: Venice Commission, North-South Centre, Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sport (EPAS), the Co-operation Group for the Prevention of, Protection Against and Organisation of Relief in Major Natural and Technological Disasters (EUR-OPA) and the Pompidou Group. It also has observer status with the European Pharmacopoeia and is a Contracting Party to the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (Bern Convention). In the past, Morocco has asked to accede to several CoE conventions and has continued to show an interest in this regard. This trend in legal integration through the gradual accession to certain of the CoE's legal instruments is expected to be stepped up on account of Morocco's "Advanced Status" with the EU.

Following the adoption of PACE Resolution 1598 (2008) on strengthening co operation with the Maghreb countries, a delegation from the Moroccan Parliament has been regularly invited to attend the PACE's plenary meetings. In the course of his visit to Morocco in December 2010, the PACE President met the Speakers of both Chambers of the Moroccan Parliament, the Minister of the Interior, the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Co-operation and the President of the National Human Rights Council.

Further to the report by the Consultative Committee on Regionalisation, published in 2011, to which the Congress was able to provide input, the progress made by Morocco in this area has been remarkable. Incorporating regionalisation into the constitution opens up new prospects for co-operation with the Congress, and this co operation is further assisted by the links between the National Association of Local Authorities (ANCLM) and the Congress.

"Neighbourhood Co-operation Priorities for Morocco 2012-2014"

Human Rights

Protection and promotion of human rights

Gender equality

Moroccan women play an important role in national political life and today are emerging as important political actors. The new Constitution establishes the principle of gender equality. Morocco's efforts to reduce gender discrimination in its legal system have also produced significant changes which are reflected in the country's Criminal Code, Labour Code, and Code of Personal Status (CSP). Significant progress has also been made as a result of the new institutional Act on the organisation of the Chamber of Representatives, which increases the number of women elected from 30 to 60 members, ensuring a better representation of women in this lower Chamber.

A number of complementary measures are planned under the Programme on Gender Equality in Morocco. The Venice Commission will give advice on the drafting of legislation to promote the participation of women in political life, in particular through the electoral law, and the North-South Centre will be organising awareness-raising events on this issue, such as a follow-up to the conference on "Women as agents of change in the Southern Mediterranean", held in Rome in October 2011.

Overall objective	**To promote women's rights and their participation in public and political life, particularly in decision-making fields**
Expected results	• expert opinion by the Venice Commission on legislation relating to the participation of women in political life, including an analysis of the participation of women as provided for in the electoral legislation, including recommendations. Awareness-raising seminars targeting relevant professionals and NGO representatives to exchange best practices on standards and mechanisms; • exchange of best practices on gender budgeting between Morocco and CoE member states in co-operation with the International Organisation of La Francophonie; • increased awareness brought about by actions targeting representatives of political parties, members of Parliament, local and regional elected representatives and representatives of civil society on participation, empowerment and de jure/de facto gender equality; • assistance to an on-going project aimed at establishing an Authority for gender equality and combating all forms of discrimination and linking it with the relevant European networks.
Partners	*Ministry of Solidarity, Women, Family and Social Development, Ministry of Justice and Freedoms, National Institute of Youth and Democracy, National Human Rights Council, Interministerial Delegation on Human Rights, the new Authority for gender equality and combating all forms of discrimination, Venice Commission, North-South Centre, the CoE's Conference of INGOs, International Organisation of La Francophonie.*

Combating violence against women

The prevention of violence against women is a priority for both the CoE and the Moroccan Authorities. According to the National Survey on the Prevalence of Violence against Women carried out by the High Commission for Planning (HCP) in partnership with the Ministry of Solidarity, Women, Family and Social Development, a large number of women in Morocco would appear to have been victims of violence in one form or another. Morocco has made visible progress towards combating domestic violence, in particular through recent legislative changes. In view of its expertise, the CoE could assist the country in this area. The CoE Convention in this field is the first legally binding instrument creating a framework for violence prevention, protection of the victims and combating the impunity of the perpetrators.

Overall objective	**To combat violence against women**
Expected results	• greater awareness of the CoE Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence among the key governmental players, Parliament and civil society, which could lead to the possible accession of Morocco to this convention; • heightened awareness of this issue among civil servants and members of the law enforcement agencies; • contribute to a more effective action by the Multi-purpose Centres for women in difficulty, and to the provision of high quality services to women, victims of violence.
Partners	*Ministry of Solidarity, Women, Family and Social Development, Ministry of Justice and Freedoms, Ministry of Health, Ministry of the Interior, NGOs for women's rights, counseling networks (such as the Annaruz network), the North-South Centre, the CoE's Conference of INGOs.*

Protection of children against violence

The protection of children is among the main priorities of the Moroccan authorities, as shown by the fact that the country is a Contracting Party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and that its approach is based on a National Action Plan for Children. The CoE's extensive expertise in this field and its conventions (Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings, Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse, the Convention on Cybercrime), and other tools (such as the Guidelines on Child-friendly Justice) could prove useful to Morocco in addressing this priority.

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Overall objective	To enhance the protection of children against all forms of violence
Expected results	• support for the implementation of measures to protect children from all forms of violence (2nd phase of the National Action Plan for Children (PAN 2012 2015)), including a national mechanism for protection reflecting Morocco's commitments following the 27th extraordinary session of the United Nations in New York in May 2002, and for the implementation of the "World fit for children" action plan, to which Morocco has subscribed; • heightened awareness of the dissemination of a culture of children's rights and of combating violence against children, including sexual violence; • strengthening the partnership with and capacities of local players to improve the range of services available and the quality of care provision for children; • identification of a network of professionals and enhancing the capacities of key players in the field of child protection, including the identification of children who are victims of violence.
Partners	*Ministry of Youth and Sport, Ministry of Solidarity, Women, Family and Social Development, Ministry of Justice and Freedoms, Ministry of Health, Ministry of the Interior, Interministerial Delegation on Human Rights, the National Children's Rights Monitoring Centre, civil society.*

Integration of people with disabilities

Morocco has reiterated on several occasions its commitment to protect and promote the rights of people with disabilities, to improve their living conditions and their participation in society. Morocco has, since April 2009, been a Contracting Party to the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. However, the full integration of people with disabilities remains, as in other countries, a challenge. The CoE's long expertise in this field can help improve the situation.

Overall objective	To help promote the rights of people with disabilities and improve their quality of life, in line with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and drawing on the CoE action plan for people with disabilities 2006-2015
Expected results	• review of the national disability legislation, policy and practice, in order to bring national legislation into line with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities; • strengthening the capacities of the key national stakeholders (governmental, associations working in this field) to draft legislation, frame policies and draw up programmes in this field through targeted training measures; • assistance with the drawing up of a national disability strategy, including sectoral action in fields such as education, vocational training, employment and labour-market integration, communication, sport and culture.
Partners	*Ministry of Solidarity, Women, Family and Social Development, Ministry of Justice and Freedoms, Interministerial Delegation on Human Rights, other ministries for which sectoral recommendations are relevant, civil society.*

Ensuring social rights and promoting health

Drug abuse and illicit trafficking (Pompidou Group)

Since 2005, Morocco has adopted a comprehensive approach in this area, through its national anti-drug Strategy and its national Programme to combat drug addiction. In addition, it has been participating in the Pompidou Group's Mediterranean network (MedNET) since 2006, becoming a member of the Pompidou Group on 1 July 2011. Morocco is the first country in the Arab world to have introduced opiate substitution treatment, in particular through the training of medical staff organised by MedNET. The CoE has been co-operating with Morocco in strengthening the fight against drug trafficking and drug abuse, through demand and supply reduction measures, including prevention and treatment measures, to support the government's national drug strategy.

Co-operation between the Pompidou Group and Morocco focuses on all the fields of demand and supply, and on the social and health-related issues, and has a strong judicial component.

Overall objective	To improve public health and the quality of drug policy implementation in Morocco, with due regard for human rights
Expected results	• evaluation of needs and consultation to ensure the application of existing legal provisions, notably by improving, communication between the justice and health departments in order to meet the needs of drug users; • setting up a drugs monitoring mechanism as a key institution in the fight against drug abuse, making it possible to put in place a health programme in the drugs field, involving the different partners and creating the necessary conditions for its implementation; • building the capacities of staff working in health-care centres to treat drug users and assist in their reintegration.
Partners	*Ministry of Health, Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Justice and Freedoms, local partners of the Pompidou Group network (MedNET), civil society.*

Fighting the counterfeiting of medical products

Morocco has singled out this sector as one of its priorities. As an observer to the European Pharmacopeia, Morocco has worked in co-operation with the CoE in recent years in the field of harmonisation and co-ordination of standardisation, regulation and quality control of medicines. Further co-operation with Morocco in these fields could possibly pave the way for its accession to the CoE Convention on the counterfeiting of medical products and similar crimes involving threats to public health, which seeks to minimise the public health risks posed by counterfeiting of medical products and related crimes.

Overall objective	To support Morocco in its accession to the Convention on the counterfeiting of medical products and similar crimes involving threats to public health
Partners	*Ministry of Health, Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Co-operation, Ministry of Trade and Industry, Parliament.*

Rule of law

Justice

Independence and efficiency of justice

Morocco was the first country in the region to begin drawing up a national justice reform strategy, which began in late 2010. This process has recently led to the designing of a detailed action plan. The new constitution, adopted in July 2011 consolidated the principle of the separation of powers, with broadened competencies entrusted to the legislative and executive powers, and gave prominence to human rights and freedoms. It provides for the enactment of two institutional acts on the Higher Council of the Judicial Power and the Status of Magistrates, currently in the drafting stage. In this way, it has established the firm foundations for securing an independent, effective, professional and transparent justice.

On the basis of a detailed analysis of the efficiency of justice to be undertaken in the coming months, this project seeks to support Morocco in its judicial reform efforts, one of the current government's priorities, at various levels. It will focus particular attention on the problems associated with judicial regionalisation, such as the organisation of the judiciary throughout the country.

Overall objective	To enhance the independence, efficiency and quality of justice by improving court performance, and supporting judicial reform and the legal framework
Expected results	• drafting of a work programme, in agreement with the Moroccan authorities, specifying the priority fields of action for judicial reform. This work programme will be drawn up on the basis of the results of an evaluation of the efficiency of justice, carried out using the methodology of the European Commission for the Efficiency of Justice (CEPEJ). The latter will co-operate more specifically with the representative courts of first instance in civil affairs, with a view to the practical application of CEPEJ court management tools. Subsequently, a broader evaluation of the functioning of justice will be carried out on this basis; • strengthening the legislative framework and capacities of the relevant institutions (in particular, the Ministry of Justice and Freedoms, and the Higher Council of the Judicial Power) by means of legislative expert opinions and training; • strengthening the capacities of justice professionals via specific actions focusing on: (a) evaluation of the training syllabuses of the Higher Institute of the Magistracy; (b) training courses on international and European standards on human rights and specialised fields of law; (c) Morocco's participation in existing training networks (see paragraph 4 below); • linking the High Council of the Judicial Power with similar institutions in Europe, through the already existing networks (such as the CoE Consultative Council of European Judges and the European network of councils of the judiciary); • Morocco's participation in one of the CEPEJ's forthcoming meetings and, subsequently, application for observer status with this committee. This status would enable Morocco to have access to existing training networks (such as the Lisbon Network on judicial training); • specific recommendations for modernising and strengthening the regional organisation of the courts.
Partners	*Ministry of Justice and Freedoms, Pilot courts, Higher Institute of the Magistracy and Higher Council of the Judicial Power, Magistrates Associations (including "L'Amicale Massania" and "Club des Juges").*

Common standards and policies

European Commission for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission)

The CoE could provide constitutional and legislative assistance via the Venice Commission, through its legal opinions on draft legislation and laws which are fundamental to the democratic functioning of institutions. The Venice Commission's expertise could be particularly helpful regarding legislation relating to human rights, such as freedom of assembly, association and expression. This would correspond to the emphasis placed on deep democracy in the new EU policy towards the Southern neighbourhood. If Morocco so requires, more flexible forms of co-operation, such as exchanges of views between experts, could be considered.

Overall objective	**To further develop the rule of law in Morocco by developing a stable and democratic legal framework and practices in accordance with European and other international standards**
Expected results	Based on Morocco's membership of the Venice Commission, the authorities have direct access to the Commission's constitutional and legislative expertise and can benefit from events organised in the country or in other member states of the Commission, allowing for a pooling of experience.
Partners	*Ministry of Justice and Freedoms, Ministry of the Interior, National Human Rights Council, Interministerial Delegation on Human Rights.*

Information society and Internet governance; freedom of expression, independence of the media

The "White Paper" on freedom of expression was published in June 2010, following broad consultation of the different stakeholders, and provides a well-structured set of proposals. As provided by the Constitution, the Press National Council should be established in 2012. In the opinion of all stakeholders, the training of journalists is pivotal, especially on issues related to human rights. The CoE could assist in this process to help ensure implementation of these proposals.

Overall objective	**To consolidate the freedom of expression and media independence and plurality through the introduction of guarantees for press freedom**
Expected results	• establishment of a legal environment more conducive to the work of journalists and the media, offering guarantees for freedom of expression; • strengthening via training, the capacities of journalists and publishers of audio and television print and online media in the fundamentals of professional and responsible journalism, including the fair and balanced coverage of elections and gender-related issues; • greater awareness, via training for the judicial and other law enforcement authorities, and for government officials, of freedom of expression and media standards in a democratic society; • the public service media undertake a review and, if necessary, re-define their remit and governance arrangements in order to ensure independence, transparency, and accountability in the best interests of a democratic society; • contribution to a communication campaign targeting the public at large on freedom of expression and the media standards required for the construction of a democratic society, for people's effective democratic participation and for political, social and economic accountability.
Partners	*Ministry of Communication, Ministry of Justice and Freedoms, Parliament, civil society, professional associations in this field.*

Strengthening non-legal protection in the field of human rights through mediation

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Overall objective	**To support the institution of the Ombudsman with a view to increased human rights protection and an effective system of non-judicial protection, as well as the effective establishment of a regional Ombudsmen in Morocco and promote exchanges between Ombudsmen at regional and international level**
Expected results	• mediation training programmes include specific modules on human rights; • support for the establishment of regional Ombudsmen as part of the Advanced Regionalisation Act; • increase awareness of the civil servants and Ombudsmen of the mechanisms for the protection of human rights and the case-law of the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR).
Partners	*The Ombudsman institution, Ministry of Justice and Freedoms, mediation training centres, civil society, North-South Centre, CoE Congress of Local and Regional Authorities. This project would also take account of the measures taken by the International Organisation of La Francophonie.*

Creation of a common legal area

The authorities have expressed an interest in acceding to certain conventions open to non-member states, a process that will be developed in conformity with the procedures provided by the relevant conventions on this issue. A seminar to provide further details of a small number of these conventions, selected in consultation between the CoE and the Moroccan authorities in the light of their importance, will be organised in the coming months.

Expected results	• the seminar provides the opportunity to address in greater depth issues relating to the implications inherent in acceding to certain key CoE conventions. • Morocco officially requests to be invited to accede to certain conventions.
Partners	*primarily the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Co-operation and the Ministry of Justice and Freedoms, plus other ministries, depending on the content of the seminar.*

International treaties and conventions signed by Morocco: documentary management

The Moroccan authorities have expressed increased interest in acceding to international treaties and conventions; this trend should become even more marked under its Advanced Status with the EU. In this context, the CoE has been asked to assist the Treaty Office in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Co-operation with the archiving of the legal instruments, in order that the relevant departments can benefit from the CoE's acknowledged expertise in this field.

Overall objective	To strengthen the ability of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Co-operation in the field of archiving management and related procedures
Expected results	A working programme is drawn up in the light of an analysis of needs in this field, and implemented through exchanges and a study visit to the CoE by senior officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Co-operation.
Partners	*Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Co-operation.*

Threats to the Rule of Law

Combating corruption, money laundering and terrorism

In recent years, Morocco has acquired a wide range of laws and regulations to combat corruption, including its National Anti-Corruption Strategy (based on "60 measures to combat corruption"), and more recently, the Protection of Whistleblowers Act (2011). In addition, Morocco is a Contracting Party to the United Nations Convention against Corruption. Following the constitutional reform of July 2011, the independence of the Central Corruption Prevention Authority (ICPC) is set to be consolidated and its powers extended. The new Anti-Corruption Action Plan (2012-2016) contains measures to prevent and combat corruption and provides for appropriate policies placing the emphasis on developing international co-operation in this field. The Government's current Plan on preventing and combating corruption gives a central role to the Inspectorate General of Finance in the fight against corruption. This institution is part of the interministerial Commission in charge of monitoring the Action Plan chaired by the Head of the Government.

The CoE's programme on combating corruption, money-laundering and the financing of terrorism is a priority for both the CoE and the Moroccan authorities.

This programme encourages the Moroccan authorities to step up and extend its co operation with the CoE by acceding to the relevant legal instruments open to non member states. It also contains a regional component, which is increasing in importance, and which seeks to promote co-operation among the countries in the region as well as between those countries and the CoE member states.

In the context of Morocco's co-operation with the CoE, representatives of the competent bodies in the country, if they express an interest, could be invited to attend one of the plenary meetings of GRECO in order to share information. This would help set up a network of contacts and make it possible to initiate detailed exchanges of views with delegations from CoE member states.

Overall objective	To promote good governance and the prevention of corruption and money-laundering on the basis of the relevant CoE standards, mechanisms and instruments by strengthening the policy framework and operational capacities
Expected results	• a work programme is drawn up in agreement with the Moroccan authorities, specifying the priority fields of action for reform in the prevention and combating of corruption, money-laundering and the financing of terrorism. This is the outcome programme of an analysis, conducted in close co operation with the competent Moroccan authorities and institutions, on the basis of monitoring mechanisms and methodologies (beginning with that of GRECO, and then including that of MONEYVAL) and suitably tailored questionnaires, complying with CoE and international standards and practices. This analysis contains practical short-term, mid-term and long-term recommendations regarding the legislation in force, the institutional framework and sectoral risks. It could, if appropriate, also include recommendations regarding the introduction of governance indicators making it possible to gauge progress in these fields, or regarding the partnerships required to ensure effective action. Depending on the progress of the institutional reforms under way, advice could be given on the framing comprehensive and modern national anti-corruption and anti-money-laundering policies, strategies and action plans. In the light of the results of the analysis, this work programme could include measures aimed at: – strengthening institutional capacities, in particular those of the Central Corruption Prevention Authority, in combating corruption by means of its investigation and monitoring competences; – raising greater awareness by helping design prevention campaigns, such as in schools and help with the training of trainers. • Resources (tools, networks) are activated to develop co-operation between Financial Intelligence Units (FIUs) in order to promote information exchange on European and international instruments, in particular those relating to anti money-laundering and combating the financing of terrorism and specifically the recommendations of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) and Moroccan legislation on combating money-laundering and the financing of terrorism. In this context, seminars could be held to raise greater awareness of the added value of CoE tools in this field (in particular, the CoE Convention on Laundering, Search, Seizure and Confiscation of the Proceeds from Crime and on the Financing of Terrorism).
Partners	*Central Corruption Prevention Authority, the Financial Intelligence Unit, Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Justice and Freedoms, the Criminal Courts, Supreme Council of the Judiciary, General Inspectorate of Finances, the Moroccan branch of Arab Region Parliamentarians against corruption (ARPACNET).*

Combating cybercrime

Morocco is reforming its criminal law legislation and, in this context, is planning on incorporating both substantive and procedural provisions, in line with the Convention on Cybercrime. Morocco also established some institutions in this field, such as a service for combating transnational cybercrime within the Ministry of Interior's Directorate General of National Security. In addition, Morocco is currently undertaking a comprehensive analysis of the body of laws in this field, as part of which a draft Code of Digital Information has been suggested. The question of training prosecutors and judges on cybercrime-related issues is also being looked into. Other CoE treaties in this field, such as the Convention for the Protection of Individuals with regard to Automatic Processing of Personal Data, could assist Morocco in its efforts to combat cybercrime.

With regard to the protection of personal data, the request submitted to the European Commission by Morocco in 2009 for recognition of the conformity of the Moroccan regulatory arrangements in this field is still being examined.

Overall objective	To support Morocco in its efforts to combat cybercrime
Expected results	• assessments of the relevant legal framework will be carried out in order to bring national legislation closer into line with standards of the Convention on Cybercrime; • the Higher Institute of the Magistracy will be able to provide advanced training for judges and prosecutors on cybercrime-related issues and electronic evidence. The national strategy for the information society and the digital economy "Maroc Numeric 2013", will provide for training in this field for all judicial officers; • Morocco makes progress in the fight against cybercrime through international police and legal co-operation; • data protection legislation is better implemented in practice.
Partners	*Ministry of Justice and Freedoms, Ministry of the Interior, Higher Institute of the Magistracy, Industry and the New Technologies, Ministry of Industry, Trade and new Technologies, National Personal Data Protection Board (CNDP).*

Preventing and combating trafficking in human beings

In recent years, Morocco has strengthened its legislative and institutional framework, adopting a whole series of measures and laws. Morocco's recent ratification of the Palermo Protocol (Additional Protocol to the UN Convention against transnational organised crime) is a further step forward in this field. In view of its expertise, the CoE could assist Morocco in its efforts to combat this global phenomenon by means of this programme, which seeks to strengthen the capacities of the instances involved in combating trafficking and their staff's ability to identify and take care of victims.

Expected results	• heighten awareness among professionals (both institutional and those in civil society) involved in the fight against human trafficking, especially by means of a seminar featuring a presentation of the CoE's instruments in this field; • capacity building of the different operators, by means of training; • a work programme be drawn up with the Moroccan authorities on the basis of a needs assessment of the country's situation in relation to trafficking in human beings.
Partners	*Ministry of Justice and Freedoms, Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Solidarity, Women, Family and Social Development, Interministerial Delegation on Human Rights, National Human Rights Council, judges, prosecutors, lawyers, consular officials, civil society.*

Democracy

Democratic Governance

Co-operation with the Parliamentary Assembly

The Partner for Democracy status, granted to the Parliament of Morocco by the PACE in June 2011, provides a particularly relevant framework for enhanced co operation between the Parliament of Morocco and the Assembly in areas at the core of the reforms undertaken by Morocco, aimed at strengthening democracy, the rule of law and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. The recent constitutional reform, which provides for a greater role of the Parliament and specific provisions to strengthen the role of the opposition should lead to closer co-operation between the PACE and the Parliament's two Chambers in the implementation of the priorities identified in the Partner for Democracy status resolution. The institutional acts planned as part of the constitutional reform, several of which relate to topics lying at the heart of the CoE's mission, will also afford opportunities for targeted thematic exchanges between members of the Moroccan Parliament and members of the PACE.

The main areas of co-operation, defined in close co-operation with the Parliament, will cover questions relating to the prerogatives of Parliament and thematic sectors in which the CoE has acknowledged expertise and for which the Parliament will have a key role to play in 2012 in the debate on and passing of the institutional acts. The priority issues identified in the Partner for Democracy status relating to human rights (including women's and children's rights and the fight against discrimination), combating corruption, the role of the media and the participation of women in political

life, will be the theme of activities in Morocco and Strasbourg in the period 2012-2014.

The parliamentary component will reinforce the implementation of the activities undertaken in the other pillars of the Programme, through raising the awareness and understanding of parliamentarians in these areas. Support for accession to the relevant CoE conventions and partial agreements will also be a priority in the co operation with the parliament, in accordance with the commitments entered into. This co-operation includes specific activities with parliamentary committees, individual parliamentarians (in particular rapporteurs), as well as Parliament staff, including targeted thematic training, expert seminars, conferences (in Morocco and in Strasbourg), and activities organised by the Assembly for parliamentarians of the region.

Overall objective	**To help strengthen the role and capacities of the Moroccan parliament, on the basis of the priorities jointly identified in the Partner for Democracy status granted in June 2011, by making members of parliaments and Parliament staff aware of the standards of the CoE in its core areas of work (human rights, democratic standards, rule of law) and providing technical support for reforms in these areas, particularly those for which institutional acts will be passed in accordance with the constitutional reform of July 2011**
Expected results	• the initiatives taken will make it possible to present to the members of the Moroccan parliament the most relevant practices in CoE member states relating to the areas of draft legislation which are a priority for Morocco in the current legislative term and for which the Assembly has recognised expertise; • relevant CoE conventions opened for signature to non-member countries be signed and ratified; • parliamentary committees and members of Parliament be made familiar with the relevant CoE standards in the field of human rights, democracy and the rule of law, and use them wherever possible in their activities. (see also the "Training of executive staff" project, below); • executive staff and civil servants in the two Chambers of parliament be provided with training giving an introduction to the CoE and the European institutions (in partnership with the European Parliament), and – for the members of the secretariats of certain committees – specific thematic training in their field of expertise.
Partners	*Parliament of Morocco (including the Chamber of Representatives and the Chamber of Counsellors).*

Democratic governance at local and regional level

Strengthening democracy at local and regional level, and enhancing the capacities of local and regional elected representatives are priorities for Morocco. Based on co operation already in progress with the Moroccan authorities, and in the light of the priority Morocco attaches to the Advanced Regionalisation Act, the Congress will continue providing assistance to the local and regional reforms under way in Morocco. Drawing on this, it might also suggest initiating work to promote the principles enshrined in the European Charter of Local Self-Government and in the CoE Reference Framework for Regional Democracy.

Bearing in mind that these reforms require a renewed leadership approach at local and regional level, the Congress also plans to develop a series of peer-to-peer exchanges and interactive seminars between Congress members and newly elected local/regional representatives.

The activities will be organised on the following main themes: the role and responsibilities of local/regional elected representatives, ethics in politics and decision making, citizen participation and positive campaigning (in preparation for the next local elections). These activities will complement programmes already under way and will take into consideration the proposal by the Moroccan authorities to further promote legal and operational capacities for local and regional democracy.

Overall objective	**To assist the local and regional reform currently taking place and help strengthen local and regional democracy**
Expected results	• organisation of exchange seminars – possibly in conjunction with the PACE – between members of the Congress and members of the parliamentary committee(s) responsible for drafting the Advanced Regionalisation Act; • strengthening of local and regional governance and the institutional capacities of local/regional authorities; • greater awareness of the standards and principles of the European Charter of Local Self-government and of the CoE Reference Framework for Regional Democracy; • greater citizen participation in local institutional life; strengthening of the National Association of Local Authorities.
Partners	*Ministry of the Interior, Parliament, CoE Congress of Local and Regional Authorities, PACE, National Association of Local Authorities (ANCLM), civil society.*

Electoral Assistance

Free and fair elections are the cornerstone of a genuine democracy and form the essential basis for a functioning democracy.

The Venice Commission has developed acknowledged standards in the field of elections and has the necessary knowledge for assisting Morocco, especially in providing opinions on draft electoral laws. It has developed tools to provide technical assistance to the bodies in charge of electoral disputes and has long-standing experience in the reform of legislation relating to political parties. It can provide assistance in constitutional matters and, in particular, support the functioning of constitutional justice. In addition it has proven experience in the training of trainers in European standards of good public governance.

Co-operation in this field would be complemented by election observation missions (PACE/the Congress), in line with the co-operation already begun in this field with the PACE, which sent a mission to observe the elections held on 25 November 2011.

Overall objective	**To bring electoral legislation fully into line with international standards and to improve the functioning of electoral processes and institutions through assistance provided by the Venice Commission**
Expected results	• electoral legislation and practice be reviewed and brought into line with international electoral standards; • technical assistance is provided to the bodies in charge of electoral disputes; • capacity-building support is provided to the electoral management bodies; • Moroccan officials participate in the network of electoral management bodies.
Partners	*Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Justice and Freedoms, governmental bodies, National Human Rights Council and other electoral management bodies, political parties, bodies in charge of electoral disputes, Venice Commission, PACE, CoE Congress of Local and Regional Authorities.*

Political parties

Political parties are an essential component of democracy and especially for democratic elections. A new Institutional Act (No. 29-11) on political parties was passed on 22 October 2011.

The Venice Commission has developed acknowledged standards in the field of political parties and has long-standing experience in the reform of legislation relating to political parties. In this field too, it could provide expertise on (draft) national legislation as well as organise activities – for example seminars – aimed at ensuring conformity of practice with international standards.

Overall objective	**To evaluate national legislation and practices on political parties so as to bring them into line with the relevant European and international standards**
Expected results	• expert opinion on the legislation on political parties; • organisation of seminars on European and international standards in this field.
Partners	*Ministry of Interior, Parliament, political parties.*

Training in democratic governance

Overall objective	**To bring a seminal contribution on Human Rights, Rule of Law and Democratic Citizenship to Moroccan society by enlisting the future political leaders and civil servants as multipliers for the reform**

Establishment of a "School of Political Studies" in Morocco

Expected results	A "School of Political Studies" is due to be set up in Morocco, in partnership with a local NGO, in the coming months. This school will join the network of more than 16 Schools of Political Studies and take part in the network's annual meeting and the Summer University for Democracy in Strasbourg. The Moroccan university sector could be involved in the work of this new body.
Partners	*Civil society, political parties, public administrative bodies, Parliament, media, university sector.*

Training of young executive staff in human rights and democratic governance

The Moroccan authorities have expressed the strong desire to offer training in human rights and democratic governance for young and future executive staff of the public administration (including the institutions established by the new constitution and sub-national public administrative authorities), Parliament staff and students of the Moroccan Diplomatic Academy. For the latter in particular, the theory training would be supplemented by practical modules at the CoE.

Expected results	• inclusion of specific modules on human rights and democratic governance in the relevant training plans, such as the Masters in human rights organised by the National Human Rights Council and the Diplomatic Academy trainings; • organisation of a traineeship programme for students of the Diplomatic Academy.
Partners	*Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Co-operation (Diplomatic Academy), national and sub-national administrative authorities, National Human Rights Council, Parliament, National Centre of Youth and Democracy.*

Sustainable Democratic Societies

Investing in youth

Since 2006, the CoE has developed co-operation in the field of youth together with civil society partners and public authorities in Morocco. It has often organised the EU training sessions and symposia for youth leaders and youth administrators on human rights education, intercultural dialogue and Euro-Mediterranean youth co-operation. The CoE has produced Arabic-language versions of major European training tools in the youth field, such as the training manual on human rights education with young people ("Compass"). Human rights education and participation of young people are making headway in some youth work and youth policy circles but further efforts are needed to secure their sustainability and impact among young people, including in schools through the work of non-governmental youth organisations.

Since 2009, the government of Morocco has expressed a strong wish to be more closely involved with the European youth policy, to exchange best practices and to adopt, where possible, European standards and instruments, including accession to the CoE Partial Agreement on Youth Mobility through the Youth Card.

The National Integrated Youth Strategy for 2020 is due to be adopted by Morocco, consolidating the many efforts undertaken in this field.

Overall objective	**To support the Moroccan government in framing its youth policy through the evaluation and design of youth policies and strategies together with the organisation of development activities for youth leaders, and enhancing youth participation and democratic citizenship**
Expected results	• support to the Moroccan government in finalising its youth policy strategy, including an examination of national youth policies by a group of international experts, comprising of recommendations for further policy development in line with international standards; • capacity-building of youth organisations to incorporate human rights education and youth participation within their programmes and activities, training and capacity-building of association executive staff and developing co-operation on a regional scale among the countries of the region in the field of education for democratic citizenship and human rights education. The capacity of youth organisations and youth worker training institutions to integrate human rights education and youth participation within their programmes is reinforced through the training of staff and trainers and the development of supporting educational material; • action to promote gender equality and the participation of young women in public life through the strengthening of civil society (in conjunction with the National Institute of Youth and Democracy); • developing practices in education for democratic citizenship and human rights education in the education system through joint capacity-building of teacher trainers, youth workers and leaders of youth organisations; • developing a partnership with the CoE to carry out studies and research in the youth field via the Arab Youth Monitoring Centre (a body established by the Arab League, whose headquarters is planned to be in Morocco) and to provide executive staff and young people with CoE training in terms of blogs to combat hate speech. Encouraging Morocco's participation in the CoE's co-operation networks in this field. As stated above, this programme will comprise a regional dimension, aimed at promoting co-operation among the countries of the region.
Partners	*Ministry of Youth and Sport, Ministry of Education, the National Institute of Youth and Democracy, civil society, The Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organisation (ALECSO), the Centre for Cross-Cultural Learning, National Human Rights Council, Interministerial Delegation on Human Rights, the Arab Youth Monitoring Centre which will be operational in Rabat with effect from spring 2012.*

Co-operation with the North-South Centre

Morocco has been a member of the North-South Centre since 1 July 2009.

Overall objective	To offer a platform of structured co-operation to Morocco at governmental, parliamentary, local and regional authority and civil society levels
Expected results	• through Morocco's membership of the North-South Centre, governmental, parliamentary, local, regional and civil society representatives of Morocco are fully integrated into the North-South Centre's ongoing processes, such as the annual Lisbon Forum, the University on Youth and Development and the Euro Africa youth co-operation programme; • the activities scheduled in Morocco to promote women's participation in public and political life, youth co-operation and the strengthening of civil society are enhanced by the North-South Centre's networking activities. An online system of training in global citizenship for educators and youth organisation leaders is established. Relevant Moroccan partners are invited to participate in and benefit from events organised in other North-South Centre member states; • the North-South Centre is used as a platform for co-operation for regional or multilateral activities in the youth and civil society fields and in promoting women as key players in bringing about change. This activity will comprise a regional dimension, aimed at promoting co-operation among the countries of the region.
Partners	*Ministry of Youth and Sport, Parliament, local and regional authorities, media and civil society, youth organisations, educators, National Human Rights Council.*

Co-operation in the audiovisual, film production and sport fields

The CoE has a whole series of conventions and tools in the field of audiovisual communication, promoting film production, education, culture and sport which could be of assistance to Morocco. This programme comprises a regional dimension, aimed at promoting co-operation among the countries of the region.

Audiovisual communication

There have been many developments in the audiovisual communication field since the abrogation of the state monopoly in 2002 and the promulgation of Law No. 77-03 in 2005, making for an even closer alignment with international and CoE standards to give a more solid guarantee of freedom of expression, objective information, media and content pluralism and cultural and linguistic diversity.

In parallel, there has been a process of legal and institutional integration which, in this field in particular, and in the light of the Advanced Status with the European Union, will probably be reflected in the Kingdom's gradual accession to certain CoE legal instruments relating to audiovisual communication.

In addition to the many challenges in this sector, particularly technological convergence and economic development, significant progress has been made in the field of regulation, giving rise to tangible results set out in reference documents which should be widely circulated, but also paving the way for new reflection requiring additional analytical efforts.

Overall objective	**To consolidate freedom of expression, the independence of the media and professional ethics, while at the same time promoting convergence of Moroccan regulations in the audiovisual sector with the CoE's instruments**
Expected results	• highlighting of the gender equality issue in the Moroccan audiovisual media, in particular through the translation into English, French and Spanish of the "Summary report on the image of women", produced by the High Authority on Audiovisual Communications (HACA), to be distributed and discussed in the margins of the Tetouan International Mediterranean Film Festival; • promotion of the internal and external pluralism of Moroccan audiovisual pluralism, via the organisation of an international conference to "Take stock of the management of audiovisual pluralism during referendums and parliamentary election campaigns in Morocco in 2011", in preparation for the local and regional elections in 2012; • consolidation of cultural and linguistic diversity in the Moroccan audiovisual media, through the drafting of a thematic report, with the assistance of the CoE, the Ministry of Culture, Moroccan public institutions working in the cultural field and the HACA, involving broad consultation of the key stakeholders; • revitalisation of the process of the Kingdom of Morocco's accession to the European Audiovisual Observatory, with the initiation, to this end, of the preparatory steps for the technical co-ordination, via the HACA, of the conditions laid down in Resolution CM/Res (92) 70 as revised by Resolution Res (2000)7 of 21 September 2000, to enable Morocco to transmit and have access to reliable, up-to-date and relevant information in the various audiovisual fields, which are necessary for monitoring developments in this strategic sector.
Partners	*Ministry of Youth and Sport, Ministry of Communication, Ministry of Culture, HACA, media and civil society, youth organisations, educators, Moroccan public institutions working in the cultural field.*

Film production

Overall objective	**To enter into co-operation with Eurimages and promote regional co-operation tools in the film industry**
Partners	*Ministry of Communication, Ministry of Culture, media and civil society, Moroccan public institutions working in the cultural field.*

Sport

Overall objective	**To promote Morocco's accession to the European Convention on Spectator Violence and Misbehaviour at Sports Events and in particular at Football Matches, and the Anti-Doping Convention**
Partners	*Ministry of Youth and Sport.*

Implementation and evaluation

A variety of methods are employed in order to target co-operation and match activities to the nature of the needs and of the beneficiaries. These methods entail:

- Helping the authorities to assess the existing legal and institutional framework and identity needs;
- Helping the authorities to draw up legislative texts, general and sectoral policies on the basis of the assessments made and of European and international standards;
- Sharing experience and exchanging good practice through the organisation of round tables and expert working groups (national and regional);
- Associating and involving the largest possible number of suitable participants in the discussion and implementation of recommendations, action and programmes through the organisation of conferences and seminars;
- Transferring knowledge and skills on specific subjects by way of training (including teacher training and courses);
- Generating awareness among key participants and the public.

Some projects and programmes might be given a regional dimension in order to promote co operation between countries on the southern shore of the Mediterranean. This regional approach is already pursued in the context of the Pompidou Group's MedNet network and the work of the North-South Centre in Lisbon.

The **follow-up to the implementation** of co-operation with Morocco will be the responsibility of the Committee of Ministers of the CoE and notably its Rapporteur Group on External Relations (GR EXT). The GR-EXT will be regularly updated by the Secretariat on the progress of the programmes and projects. For this purpose the Office of the Director General of Programmes will prepare a mid-term stocktaking report and a final assessment report.

Follow-up and evaluation of the co-operation programme's implementation will be jointly carried out by the CoE and the Moroccan authorities while meeting the requirements and conditions set by the various donors.

The EU, a key partner

The CoE and the European Union (EU) work closely together in the southern Mediterranean region in the framework of the Programme "Strengthening democratic reform in the southern Neighbourhood".

Other partners

The priorities referred to in this paper will also be implemented through voluntary contributions from other national and international partners and donors. Further information on the projects described will be available at the Office of the DG Programmes of the CoE.

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